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Diana T Fritz 06/05/2007 10:35:05 AM From DB/Inbox: Search Results

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SIPDIS
TELEGRAM

February 09, 2003

To: No Action Addressee
Action: Unknown
From: AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI (ABU DHABI 724 - PRIORITY)
TAGS: PREL
Captions: None
Subject: UAE DEPUTY PM PANDERS TO PUBLIC OPINION ON
IRAQ
Ref: None

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABU DHABI 00724

SIPDIS
CXABU:
ACTION: POL
INFO: RSO AMB DCM P/M ECON

DISSEMINATION: POL
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: CDA:TEWILLIAMS
DRAFTED: POL:STWILLIAMS
CLEARED: NONE

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FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
INFO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8358
RUEHDE/AMCONSUL DUBAI 2789
RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC
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C O N F I D E N T I A L ABU DHABI 000724

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STATE FOR NEA/NGA AND NEA/ARP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/09/2013
TAGS: [PREL](#) [UN](#) [IZ](#) [TC](#)
SUBJECT: UAE DEPUTY PM PANDERS TO PUBLIC
OPINION ON IRAQ

REF: Abu Dhabi 676

[1](#)1. (U) Classified by Charge d'Affaires Thomas Williams for reasons 1.5 (B) and (D).

[1](#)2. (U) The Emirates News Agency reported 2/9 that UAE Deputy Prime Minister Shaykh Sultan Bin Zayid Al-Nahyan, on the margins of a meeting with visiting former UNSCOM inspector Scott Ritter, "stressed the need to allow the UN inspectors the opportunity to carry on their search for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq." Sultan was also quoted as saying "the region cannot tolerate another war which may result in a catastrophe of unpredictable magnitude." The Deputy PM, who

is also UAE President Shaykh Zayid's second eldest son, used this opportunity to call for a lifting of the international sanctions on Iraq which he labeled "non-humanitarian" and "the causes (sic) of (the) death of thousands of innocent Iraqis and of (the) demolition of Iraq's economy and infrastructure." Finally, Sultan called on the international community to "apply pressure on Israel to stop its frenzied war against the Palestinian people."

13. (U) Ritter's 2/8 lecture at the Sultan Bin Zayid-sponsored, Arab League-associated, Zayid Center for Coordination and Follow-Up received widespread, front-page coverage in the UAE press (reftel). Ritter, who charged that the USG was in violation of international law, was quoted as saying that more than 95 percent of Iraq's WMD have been destroyed. He claimed that the photographs presented by the Secretary during his 2/5 UNSC presentation were taken during the Iran-Iraq war. As we previously reported, Ritter went out of his way to pan the Secretary's presentation, claiming that the USG charges are "inaccurate" and that Iraq had only one anthrax lab, which was "completely eliminated and destroyed" in 1996. Ritter complained that he had been "interrogated by the FBI" who "put a lot of pressure on me and accused me of spying for Iraq" following his latest Iraq visit. He then launched into a wholesale attack on U.S. policy, comparing it to "a car driven by a drunk driver, who is driving aimlessly and pushing himself to a disaster."

14. (C) Comment: As we noted reftel, UAE Armed Forces Chief of Staff Muhammad Bin Zayid Al-Nahyan and Information Minister Abdullah Bin Zayid Al-Nahyan both privately welcomed the Secretary's presentation. Their elder half-brother Sultan is the most outspoken of Zayid's sons and often does not coordinate his statements with the rest of the leadership; we have been bluntly informed on at least one occasion that Sultan's remarks "do not reflect UAEG views." Nevertheless, Sultan frequently reflects popular sentiment and he is well aware that the overwhelming majority of Emiratis (71 percent according to a recent confidential poll) are against military action in Iraq.

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